

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are now pending in the current application. In an Office Action dated September 24, 2003, the Examiner finally rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Joline, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,005,696 ("Joline"). In addition, the Examiner objected to claims 2-9 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that claims 2-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Finally, the Examiner indicated allowance of claims 10-20. Applicants' representative has failed to convince the Examiner that claim 1 is not anticipated by Joline in previous responses, and is currently amending claim 1 to overcome the Examiner's rejection in the requested continued examination. Again, Applicants' representative wishes to thank the Examiner, on behalf of the Applicants, for the Examiner's contingent allowance of claims 2-9 and allowance of claims 10-20.

Claim 1 now clearly claims a multi-device enclosure that includes a processor, and that isolates itself using port bypass circuits in order to carry out internal testing. As Applicants' representative has previously discussed, Joline discloses a testing method for testing line and/or trunk circuits in a telephone system distributed over remote offices and a centralized test center. In Joline's method, the line and/or trunk circuits are coupled to a maintenance port of a particular office, and then backhauled from the maintenance port to the remote test center via a shared network. As discussed in detail in Joline, in order to backhaul the line and/or trunk circuits, the test center arranges for the remote office to transmit and receive messages through alternate circuits within the normal SONET ring connection by allocating alternative bandwidth in the SONET ring (column 9, paragraph beginning on line 38). In essence, as stated in the sentence beginning on line 24 of column 7, Joline's invention arranges to "serially impose a test device into the circuit under test in a manner similar to that discussed above relative to Figure 1." Joline thus arranges to connect a link and/or trunk line through alternative bandwidth in an optical fibre ring to a remote test center. In Applicants' representative's opinion, claim 1 is now clearly distinguished from, and unanticipated by Joline, because

Joline remotely tests trunk lines from a test center. Moreover, claim 1 now clearly claims a multi-device enclosure including a processor.

All of the claims remaining in the application are now clearly allowable.
Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.
The application is now clearly in order for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,
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